

The Coastal Management Enhancement Act of 1999

The Administration Bill to Reauthorize and Amend
the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972
To

Ensure that the Nation's Coastal Uses and Resources
are Used, Conserved and Protected for the Benefit
of Present and Future Generations

Background

This document provides the background, proposed text, a section-by-section analysis, and statement of purpose and need for the Administration's proposed Bill to reauthorize and amend the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA), 16 U.S.C. §§ 1451-1465, entitled the "*Coastal Management Enhancement Act of 1999*" (CMEA). Attached to this document is the entire CZMA as amended by the CMEA, showing the additions and deletions. It has been nearly ten years since the last substantive revision of the CZMA. The 1999 reauthorization of the CZMA presents a unique opportunity to provide a vision and a framework for coastal and ocean resources management into the next century.

The CZMA defines and authorizes the Coastal Management Program (CMP) and the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS).¹ The CZMA is the only national authority that works with all sectors of government to comprehensively manage and address the many and increasing pressures on the use of our coastal areas and our coastal and ocean environments. The CZMA has enjoyed wide non-partisan support among Congress, states, local governments, interest groups and the public. The benefits of the CZMA and broad-based support can be seen in the effectiveness of the state CMPs, the growing network of NERRS, the vitality of our coastal economies, and the protection and sustainability of important coastal resources and habitats.

¹ The national system for the management of the Nation's coastal and ocean resources have Federal and state components. The Federal component is located within the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, which is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Ocean Service, U.S. Department of Commerce. The state component consists of federally approved coastal management programs (CMPs) in 32 coastal states. (The term "coastal states" or "states" refers to the eligible states, including Great Lake states, U.S. commonwealths and trust territories.) Of the three remaining eligible states that do not have a federally approved CMP, Minnesota's CMP should be federally approved in early 1999, Indiana's draft CMP should be available in 1999 and Illinois is not currently participating. There are 22 federally designated National Estuarine Research Reserves in eighteen states. Six additional reserves are in development and the Kachemak Bay (Alaska) and Guana-Tolomato-Matanzas (Florida) reserves should be designated in 1999.

For over twenty-five years the CZMA has provided goals and priorities for how states and the Federal government manage the Nation's coastal and ocean resources. States have made great strides implementing management programs which reduce threats to coastal wetlands, improve coastal water quality, expand public access to the coast, revitalize urban waterfronts and educate the public about the need to manage and protect coastal and ocean resources. However, stresses on coastal and ocean resources and management challenges also have increased, and continue to increase, dramatically. These challenges include: continued rapid population growth in coastal areas, increasing resource stresses and user conflicts, increased physical and psychological separation of coastal residents from natural resources, and other demands on coastal resources.

The proposed changes in CMEA will improve the capability of the Federal government, coastal states and local governments to address these issues. To meet these challenges, CMEA:

- provides significant new funding resources to address coastal issues through the President's Lands Legacy Initiative;
- brings the implementation of the coastal nonpoint pollution control program within the CZMA, focusing on NOAA's traditional habitat protection and restoration mission, and describes state CMP agencies' responsibilities;
- addresses emerging habitat issues, including essential fish habitat, and coral reefs;
- provides support to local coastal communities to develop environmentally protective solutions to the impacts on coastal uses and resources caused by development and sprawl, that will revitalize previously developed areas, discourage development in undeveloped and environmentally sensitive areas, emphasize water dependent uses, and protect coastal waters and habitats;
- strengthens the ability of coastal states and NOAA to provide technical assistance, management-oriented research, and mediation services;
- strengthens the link between the estuarine research reserves and coastal management programs, and strengthens the capabilities of the reserves to address coastal management issues at the state and local level; and
- makes other technical amendments to improve efficiency and the flexibility of the CZMA's state-Federal partnership.